

CHARIVARIA.

NAN PATTERSON, the American chorus girl, has been released, and she will, after all, be able to play *Hamlet*.

King PETER OF SERBIA, it is said, will abdicate at an early date in favour of his son the Crown Prince GEORGE. It is not known in what way the youth has offended his father.

The KAISER has despatched one of his officers to Mukden to confer on General NOGI the Order "Pour le Mérite," and General NOGI will shortly have the right to head his note-paper, "Under the distinguished patronage of H.I.M. the German EMPEROR and King of PRUSSIA."

We live in revolutionary times. The representative of the War Office in the House of Lords has declared that a letter written by the Duke of WELLINGTON on the subject of national defence cannot now be considered up-to-date.

The Army Council, too, is awake to the danger arising from our shortage of officers. King ALFONSO of Spain has been appointed a British General.

The provincial journal which, the other day, published the following paragraph:—"Private letters from Madagascar state that two cyclists have visited the island, causing the loss of 200 lives and immense damage to property," and followed it up with a leader virulently attacking motor-cyclists, now informs us that the word should have been "cyclones." The printer has been warned.

Some members of the House of Commons are of the opinion that that institution is greatly under-assessed for rates. On the other hand there are outsiders who think it is very much over-rated.

Publicans are complaining of great depression in their trade. It is not, however, a fact that universal sympathy is felt for them, and the proposal that several heavy drinkers at present in gaol shall be released until the arrival of better times is only receiving lukewarm support.

Those who like to be up-to-date in what is the fashion and what is not will be interested to hear that Lady WARWICK proposes to give up wearing white kid-gloves when shaking hands with other Social Democrats.

Mr. BALFOUR has declared the invasion of England to be impossible; but, to make assurance doubly sure, the Aliens Bill will be persisted in.



AT THE ACADEMY.

Miss Jones. "How came you to think of the subject, Mr. DE BRUSH?"

Eccentric Artist. "Oh, I HAVE HAD IT IN MY HEAD FOR YEARS."

Miss Jones. "How wonderful! WHAT DID THE PAPERS SAY?"

Eccentric Artist. "SAID IT WAS FULL OF 'ATMOSPHERE,' AND SUGGESTED 'SPACE.'"

Personally, we think it would have been much better fun if Mr. BALFOUR had not let it be known that a successful invasion is impossible, but had allowed the invaders to come, and then defeated them.

Another boot strike has happily been averted. A woman fined for drunkenness at Hull made the attempt, but the magistrate just ducked in time, and the boot missed his head by an inch.

The latest rumour about *The Cheat* is that it is just a portrait group, and that the happy title (a picture ought always to have some sort of title) was only thought of at the last moment.

In reference to the theft of miniatures from the Royal Institute, some pain has

been caused to the artistes concerned by the assertion that the pictures were obviously stolen for the sake of their valuable frames and settings.

Answer to a correspondent:—Yes, formerly the House of Lords was our final Court of Appeal, but now there is the *Daily Mail*.

It is intimated that Mr. J. D. ROCKEFELLER is about to establish a fund of £2,000,000 for the benefit of superannuated ministers, and the hopes entertained by Liberals that the present Ministry will shortly resign have once more been revived.

"The Russian Army has worked like a machine," remarked a Russophil, the other day. A flying machine?

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL MOMENT.

[As Mr. Punch goes to press, signs are not wanting that Admiral ROZHDISTVENSKY is alive to the journalistic situation exposed in the following lines.]

THIS to your new address, I can't say what,
Somewhere off Cochin-China (*avis rara*),
Either Honkohe or another spot
Along that Oriental Riviera,
(Not knowing more precisely where you lodge
Under the chatty *nom de guerre* of "Rox.")—

This friendly note I forward—*verbum sap.*—
While thus you dally up and down the tropics,
There is a danger lest you overlap
The limit set to journalistic topics;
Except you go at once to face your doom
You will, I warn you, cease to be a Boom!

You had your chance a few brief weeks ago
During the precious Eastertide vacation;
Our founts of crystal fact were running low,
We had to live on mere imagination;
The House was up, the football season done,
And cricket (blessed theme!) not yet begun.

The Press could then have spared you ample space;
Her columns gaped to get a nine days' wonder;
But you from watering-place to watering-place
Pottered about—a most amazing blunder!
The vital hour that seldom comes again
You spent in filling up with sweet champagne.

For now the Tests are on us; in a week
Their opening round will claim our purplest patches;
From dawn to dewy eve the air will reek
Of COTTER's lightning hops, and JESSOR's catches,
Of FRY's intrepid nerve, of TRUMPER's charm,
Of WILFRED's curlers "coming with his arm."

Thereafter, with the Ashes still at stake,
Taxing the Pressman's every mental sinew,
No self-respecting Print would undertake
To show a more than casual interest in you;
Until, in fact, the rubber's won or lost,
Even the fiery Rox must be a frost.

Barely a week in which to take your knock!
Therefore, unless you much prefer the notion
Of being shelved among our Autumn stock
Of monstrous snakes careering round the ocean,
Now while the hour invites, good Rox the Rover,
In Heaven's name go on, and get it over! O. S.

Sympathy between Two Dumb Animals.

"On Saturday morning" (May 13) "a fire broke out in a mule at — and spread rapidly. The Corporation Fire Brigade turned out under Superintendent GEE, and extinguished the flames after about an hour's work. The damage is not stated, but it is estimated at some hundreds of pounds."—*Manchester Guardian*.

The high figure at which the damage is placed makes us fear that the mule may have been permanently disabled, or even utterly consumed. At the same time we sincerely congratulate the Gee on his efforts (of which we can only roughly estimate the h.p.) to save his poor fellow-creature.

THE Archdeacon of LONDON was announced to preach at Milford Church last Saturday to brethren of the Beauropier Lodge of Freemasons. We are very glad to learn from the *Derby Express* that "a dispensation to wearing clothing was granted by Grand Lodge." The weather has certainly been very warm.

IN BERLIN.

In the *Thiergarten* there is a broad avenue known as the *Sieges Allée*, the Avenue of Victory. At the end of it rises the huge column, topped by a gigantic figure of Germania, gilded and winged, which commemorates the triumphs of the Prussian soldiers in the wars of 1864, 1866 and 1870. As you approach this avenue you are surprised by flashes of brilliant white which dart out, as it were, from the young green of the trees that flank the paths on either side, and when you investigate the cause of these glittering appearances you find that they proceed from the thirty-two statues which line the avenue like so many marble sentinels. There in battle array, fronting one another, sixteen to each side, stand for ever the Margraves, Electors, Kings and Emperors of the great house of Brandenburg, from Margrave ALBERT THE BEAR, who died in 1170, down to the Emperor WILLIAM THE FIRST, whom many men still young can remember to have seen. The conception of this marble embodiment of all his princely ancestry was that of the present EMPEROR. The execution of it was entrusted to many eminent German sculptors. The work began in 1898 and was finished in 1901, and from that moment to the present the people of Berlin, who are a light-hearted and—it must be admitted—an irreverent race, have spent no small part of their energies in showering epigrams, witticisms and sarcasms on the sculptured effigies of those who formerly held rule in Berlin. They have been represented as duelling in pairs, as playing a football match against one another, as rowing races, or as avenging themselves by tortures (to which their swords and battle-axes and chain armour lent a considerable truculence) upon those who by carving them had condemned them to pose before the ridicule of later generations. At a certain *cabaret*, in which I was among the audience, the most highly-appreciated item of the programme was the solemn recitation to appropriate music of a parody of the *Erkönig*, which represented the father and his child riding home late through the night and wind, and also, as it chanced, through the *Sieges Allée*. The child goes from terror to terror at the sight of the various statues, and finally, on coming to ROLAND of Berlin, he dies in convulsions.

Now to anyone coming fresh from the ideal glory of our GEORGE THE THIRD in Cockspur Street or our GEORGE THE FOURTH in Trafalgar Square, there is something almost graceless and wanton in the scorn devoted by the Berliners to their sovereign statues. ROLAND of Berlin, terrific and prodigious as he is, has not the solemn ineptitude that is inseparable from JOHN STUART MILL and ISAMBARD KINGDOM BRUNEL on the Embankment or from SIR ROBERT PEELE by the Palace at Westminster. As a self-respecting child I could meet ROLAND on any dark night with composure, but I should prefer not to come within the scope of the Duke of WELLINGTON on Constitution Hill. At the same time it must be admitted that among many finely conceived and nobly executed statues in the *Sieges Allée* there are some that do not err, let us say, either through excess of beauty or by a studied avoidance of the grotesque.

The Elector JOACHIM THE FIRST NESTOR appears to have ruled from 1499 to 1535. It is to the credit of his subjects that for thirty-six years they should have been able to endure the authority of a gentleman who, if his statue may be trusted, was the most supercilious and contemptuous monarch that ever drew a sword. His successor, JOACHIM THE SECOND, has bags under his eyes in which he could have carried a week-end kit with ease; and JOHN SIGISMUND, in profuse knickerbockers, is a Dutch delight of fatness. Another of these gentlemen, whose name I forget, is represented with a pair of well-curved legs crossed in an attitude of repose which is not unnatural, seeing that his heavily-moustached face is at least two sizes too big for him.

On the opposite side of the Avenue is the Margrave OTTO



AN OFFICIAL SEDATIVE.

JOHN BULL. "SLEEPING DRAUGHT, EH? WHY, I THOUGHT THEY WANTED ME TO WAKE UP!"

[Mr. BALFOUR's statement that "the invasion of England is impossible" threatens to discourage the development of the Home Defence movement.]



THE OFFICIAL REVOLUTION

THE OFFICIAL REVOLUTION OF THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

MA

THE
suit
he
hea
was
ex
the
slee
spe
A
life
par
my
for
cha
dwo
wh

[
upo
var
I
sen
see
cov
all
nov
Ba
Th



"FATHER, IT'S RAINING."

"OH, WELL, LET IT RAIN."

"I WAS GOING TO, FATHER."

THE LAZY. He has evidently been to bed in his steel cap and suit of mail, and having been roused much against his will he has been forced to stand for his portrait. There is a heavy air of sleep in his eyes, his lips droop as though he was just about to yawn before ordering his sculptor off to execution for waking him. He was deposed in 1365, and since then has doubtless beaten the Emperor BARBAROSSA's record for sleep. I can think of no better cure for insomnia than an inspection of this yawn-provoking statue. It is a public opiate.

And now I bid farewell to Berlin, the pleasant city where life is easy and cheerful; where the beer is good, and the parade-step of the soldiery is prodigious. In future years my memory will turn to the Spree with all the more fondness for having heard it reviled by those who knew not its charms and were ignorant of the hospitable welcome that the dwellers on its banks are accustomed to extend to a stranger who visits them.

TOM THE TOURIST.

DRAMATIC NOTES OF THE FUTURE.

[A little child is the hero of *Everybody's Secret*; the curtain rises upon four little children in *Her Own Way*; there are children of various ages in *Alice-Sit-by-the-fire*.]

Mr. BARRIE's new play, *The Admirable Crèche*, will be presented to-morrow. We understand that there is a pretty scene in the Third Act in which several grown-ups are discovered smoking cigars. It may confidently be predicted that all the world will rush to the "Duke of York's" to see this novelty. *The Admirable Crèche* will be preceded at 8.30 by *Bassinette—A Plea for a numerous family*, a one-act play by THEODORE ROOSEVELT and LOUIS N. PARKER.

Little Baby WILKINS is making quite a name with her

wonderful rendering of *Perdita* in the Haymarket version of *A Winter's Tale*. As soon as Actor-Manager WILKINS realised the necessity of cutting the last two Acts (in which *Perdita* is grown up) the play was bound to succeed. By the way Mr. E. H. COOPER's new book, *Perdita's I have known*, is announced.

Frankly we are disappointed in Mr. PINEBO's new play *Little Arthur*, produced at Wyndham's last week. It treated of the old old theme—the love of the hero for his nurse. To be quite plain, this stale triangle, Mother—Son—Nurse, is beginning to bore us. Are there no other themes in every-day life which Mr. PINEBO might take? Could he not, for instance, give us an analysis of the mind of a young genius torn between the necessity for teething and the desire to edit a great daily? Duty calls him both ways: his duty to himself and his duty to the public. Imagine a WILKINS in such a scene!

The popular editor of the *Nursery*, whose unrivalled knowledge of children causes him to be referred to everywhere as our greatest playwright, is a little at sea in his latest play, *Rattles*. In the First Act he rashly introduces (though by this time he should know his own limitations) two grown-ups at lunch—Mr. JONES the father, and Dr. BROWN, who discuss JOHNNY's cough. Now we would point out to Mr. CROUPE that men of their age would be unlikely to have milk for lunch; and that they would not say "Yeth, pleath"—unless of Hebraic origin, and Mr. CROUPE does not say so anywhere. Mr. CROUPE must try and see something of grown-ups before he writes a play of this kind again.

We regret to announce that CECIL TOMKINS, doyen of actor-managers, is down again with mumps.

MARCH OF MUSICIANS ON LONDON.

STRANGE SCENES IN EAST ANGLIA.

(Exclusive Report.)

MUSICIANS being proverbially highly strung and sensitive people, it is not to be wondered at that the example of the Army Boot Strike should have met with speedy emulation. It will be remembered that an exceedingly successful meeting of village choirs was recently held at King's Lynn, at which hundreds of vocalists took part. Unfortunately a premature and inadequate account of the Festival appeared in the columns of a well-known London weekly, and this aroused such indignation amongst the choralists that it was unanimously resolved to march on London and demand an explanation from the editor. Arrangements for the journey were speedily made, knapsacks were packed containing sandwiches, sponges, tuning-forks, pitch-pipes and other necessities, and at 6 A.M. on Thursday morning a start was effected from the Corn Hall, King's Lynn.

Before this, however, Mr. W. H. LESLIE, the popular chairman of the Village Choirs Committee, addressed the demonstrators in a rousing speech, appealing to the tenors to maintain their pitch, whatever happened, and recommending them, if all other means of obtaining redress should fail, to serenade Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS with the "*March of the Men of Harlech*," arranged for double mixed chorus and drums. The children's choirs had begged earnestly to be allowed to take part in the march, but the County Inspector of Police, himself a *basso cantante* of no mean powers, was reluctantly obliged to intervene, and eventually no one under eighteen years of age was permitted to join in the march.

Telegrams received on Friday announced that the demonstrators had reached Cambridge on Thursday night. Their original intention had been to walk all the way, but on arriving at Ely in the afternoon, and finding a train in the station, the choralists decided on a *coup de main* and, overpowering the station-master and porter, boarded the carriages and forced the engine-driver to start. The authorities at Cambridge, however, were advised by wire of what had happened, and on the arrival of the train a *posse* of police arrested the entire body.

Fortunately, however, Dr. ALAN GRAY, the colossal organist of Trinity College, and other leading Cambridge musicians, got wind of what had occurred, a hasty appeal to the generosity of undergraduates was made, and the episode was closed by the payment of a lump sum of £20. The night being fine, the singers decided to camp out on Parker's

Piece, having previously given an open-air concert in the market place, at which the Brancaster Caddies' Junior Choir greatly distinguished themselves by their touching rendering of "*The Wearing of the Green*."

An early start was negotiated next morning, and excellent progress was made for about ten miles, when an unfortunate incident occurred. The Norfolk Minstrels were walking ten abreast in a serried mass singing STEVENS's noble glee "*The Cloud-capt Towers*," when they encountered some thirty athletic stockbrokers who were engaged in a walking race to Cambridge, and on their failing to realise the need of at once making way for the plutocratic pedestrians the two forces became inextricably entangled, blows were exchanged, and the leading tenor of the Heacham Senior Choir sustained a contused nose. Numbers, however, prevailed in the long run, the Dersingham basses in particular distinguishing themselves by the vigour of their attack, and after administering first-aid to the financiers, already somewhat exhausted by their exertions, the singers marched on with renewed courage to the strains of "*O who will o'er the Downs so free*."

Little doubt was entertained that the demonstrators would have reached their goal on Saturday night, had it not been for the extraordinary event which occurred in the neighbourhood of Stratford. This was nothing less than their encountering another and larger body of vocalists who were also engaged on a marching demonstration.

These turned out to be a majority of those who had taken part in the recent competition at Aylesbury, and who, being dissatisfied at the verdict of the adjudicators, had determined to march to Stratford-on-Avon to appeal to Miss MARIE CORELLI to espouse their cause. Unfortunately Mr. HENRY BIRD, who had kindly consented to accompany them on their march, confused Stratford-atte-Bowe with Stratford-on-Avon, and thus precipitated the collision which brought the march of the Norfolk demonstrators to a disastrous close. They cannot, however, be fairly charged with pusillanimity, for the Buckinghamshire forces undoubtedly presented a most formidable front. First of all came 100 sopranos singing "*With Verdure Clad*;" 78 altos followed rendering "*Voi che sapete*" in an impressive unison; then came 84 tenors chanting "*Deeper and Deeper Still*," and, lastly, 67 basses, all sonorously interpreting "*The Wanderer*," Mr. HENRY BIRD with masterly ubiquitousness accompanying all four detachments on a portable pianino.

After a brief parley—which made it clear that the Buckinghamshire vocalists

had now also determined to march on London—the leaders of the Norfolk forces decided that it would be hopeless to gain the ear of the London public in the face of such overwhelming rivalry, and regretfully resolved to retrace their steps to East Anglia. This determination, we learn, has since been carried out without any further casualties, the Borough Council of King's Lynn having contributed liberally to the repatriation of their heroic fellow Norfolkians.

ADVANTAGES.

By Luke Tapley.

A WOODEN LEG.

THERE is a curiously wrong-headed idea prevalent that a wooden leg is an inconvenience, an obstacle, a blemish, an eyesore, a limitation, a sign of incapacity, a confession of failure. Quite sensible men have been betrayed into this view; but how shallow and superficial it is a moment's careful thought will show. So far from a wooden leg being any deterrent, one might almost say that only the wooden-legged really know what living is. The profound student of life can see a thousand merits in a sound leg of good honest timber impossible to the fragile, transitory limb of flesh and bone upon which so many unenterprising mortals are content to shuffle to the grave.

The mere fact that one has a wooden leg at all is in itself a proof that the original limb, the clumsy flesh and bone affair, was a disappointment. Where is it, anyway? Gone, cut off, buried. Why, how was that? one asks. Wasn't it strong enough? Couldn't it resist the machinery, or the bullet, or whatever it was? No? What a poor, made-in-Germany concern! And you couldn't grow another, and so had to fall back on a poor old tree! It speaks well for trees anyway. Trees are best. You can count on a tree. If anything goes wrong with a wooden leg you can have another one on in a minute; but the supply of the real article gives out at once.

The usefulness of a wooden leg! Its resources! You can't take off a real leg and knock down a man with it. Long JOHN SILVER when in difficulties had his wooden leg off in a twinkling. You can't mend a real leg with glue. In a truly sensible world all male babies would be born with wooden legs, and so save half our trouble; especially babies who were going to be soldiers. You can't catch cold in it; it is subject to no rheumatic twinges; it reduces the number of blisters by fully fifty per cent. It halves one's boot bill. The wooden-legged man need never do such a boring thing as dance any more. He will be excused from being best man.

He is not likely to be asked to play lawn tennis. Some one will be allowed to field and run for him at cricket. When there is a good arm-chair it is odds but it will be offered to him. He can enjoy at once the pleasures of youth and the privileges of old.

There was once a wooden-legged man who was lost in the snow. He fought his way to a hut where a woodman had lived; but the woodman was dead and the hut was deserted. He had some matches and he found some twigs on the hearth, but no other firing. He lit the twigs and broke up a chair and burned it, and so got warmth into him. Then he broke up the only other chair. Then he burned the table. Still no one came. He ate nothing for hours and hours, hoping for relief. Then he ate his boot. At last all the furniture was burnt, but if he let the fire out he would die. So he took off his leg and burned that, and went on eating his boot. Just as he was swallowing the last piece of the upper, and the last fragment of the leg was smouldering in the fire, the search party arrived and saved him.

A critic who heard this story said that it proved little, because if the man had had two boots he could have held out longer; but then he would not have had a wooden leg at all, and would therefore have frozen to death in the midst of his plenty. One wooden leg is better than many boots.

There were once two men who met after each had returned from a solitary expedition far from civilisation. One was a wooden-legged man. When they came to compare notes they found that each had broken an arm. But whereas the wooden-legged man still had the use of his, the other's was gone. The circumstances were the same in each case. Each had shot a tiger, who had then sprung on him from behind and shattered an arm before he died. The man with two ordinary ineffectual legs had had to stagger to a native village many miles distant before he could be assisted, and then it was too late. The other man had quickly taken off his wooden leg, held it between his teeth while he cut splints from it, bound up his arm, and was now as well as ever. How beautiful this is, this instant altruistic readiness of one limb to come to the service of the other! But possible only where the limb is of wood.

A wooden leg can play a thousand parts. It is a hammer, as well as a club; a cricket bat on occasions; a hod for bricks; a camp stool; a support for the drowning; a jury mast for the shipwrecked; a flagstaff for a retired sailor; a soup ladle; a conductor's baton. It may be made hollow and filled with useful commodities, such as gold, ink, pemmican, testimonials, whiskey. No



TO KEEP HIS MEMORY GREEN.

He. "I WAS AN INTIMATE FRIEND OF YOUR LATE HUSBAND. CAN'T YOU GIVE ME SOMETHING TO REMEMBER HIM BY?"

She (shyly). "How would I do?"

man with a wooden leg is ever wholly destitute: he has his leg. I. T.

A FRANK APPEAL.

[The Petitioner is not sure of the pronunciation of the Great Name.]

PLEASE, wealthy Mr. CARNEGIE,
Give fifty thousand pounds to me.

But fifty thousand pounds to me gie,
And I will praise your name, CARNEGIE.

Dear charitable, kind CARNEGIE,
Do give me fifty thou., I beg 'ee.

Just fifty thou., for duns are plaguy,
And I "will ever pray," CARNEGIE.

THE *Petersburgski Listok* announces that General KUROPATKIN is about to retire to his country seat. This craving for a final and uninterrupted retreat is, perhaps, not unnatural.

The Advertisement Literary.

THE high example set by Printing House Square in the matter of the advertisement literary (as Miss CORRELL would call it) is finding imitators in the Provinces. A Sunderland tailor issues the following prose fancy:—

"Progressiveness is the realization of success and from the inception of our Men's department a year ago, healthy expansion has been our forward movement. Up-to-date goods of superior quality at the keenest prices was its life germ which needed but the nurturing conditions to spring forth into withstanding strength. These have been employed: visibly by successively increasing space and service accommodation; diametrically by intelligent and continued supervision."

"BREVET-MAJOR W. L. FOSTER, D.S.O., one of the well-known Worcestershire cricketing family, has been posted to the 100th Battery, R.F.A., at Deepcut." Seldom have our military authorities shown a finer sense of the fitness of things.

WHY I HAVE GIVEN UP WRITING NOVELS.

(A Personal Explanation in Two Parts.)

PART I.

I HAVE presented the world with but one work of Fiction—and yet I have already come to the irrevocable resolution that my first novel shall be also my last! Such a decision is so unusual that I feel the Public is entitled to some explanation of the circumstances which have left me no other alternative.

First let me say that my reason was *not* that *Poisoned Porridge* (BELLONS AND BÖHMER, 6s.) was a failure in any sense of the term. Far from it. It was referred to as "the Novel of the Week" by so high an authority on literary matters as "TONEY TOSH"; both the *Clacton Courier* and the *Peebles Post* gave it notices so flattering as to be almost fulsome, while the *Giggleswick Gazette* pronounced the opinion that it "would serve to while away an idle half-hour which could not be better employed." I have preserved these and many similar press-cuttings, in case I should be called upon to prove my assertions. Moreover, I know of several friends who inquired for the work at more than one Circulating Library and were informed that it was "out." This being so, I have every reason for anticipating that my Publisher's statement of accounts, when furnished, will be found a highly satisfactory document.

But indeed I had never a doubt from the first that *Poisoned Porridge* would thrill the Public as intensely to read as it thrilled me to write it. Each successive Chapter, as it flowed like lava from my pen, came as a further revelation of the wondrous creative force that had till then been latent and unsuspected within me. Athens is recorded in the *Classical Dictionary* to have sprung in complete armour from the head of Zeus, but one character after another came out of my brain, and all endued with such super-abundant vitality that I was quite incapable of controlling their sayings and doings, which I could only record with breathless admiration.

This, I am aware, is quite a common experience with all novelists who possess the priceless gift of imagination, but the sequel in my own case was, I venture to think, rather more exceptional.

I should explain that I am a person of studious and literary habits, with a fixed income, and that I occupy a semi-detached villa-residence in a quarter that has acquired a considerable reputation for social exclusiveness—I allude to Upper Balham. It was here that *Poisoned Porridge* was composed (though the proofs, or at least the major portion of them, were revised in temporary lodgings fronting the Marine Parade at Bognor, Sussex).

Well, on a certain evening shortly after the work was published, I was seated in my study at Helicon Lodge, Upper Balham, when I heard the front-door bell ring violently, and presently my housekeeper announced that a young gentleman, who declined to give his name but declared that he was well-known to me, requested an interview.

I decided to receive him—not without misgivings that he had already absconded with the coats and umbrellas; but, when he was shown in, my first glance at his countenance told me the injustice of my suspicions. I could not be mistaken in that open brow, over which the chestnut hair fell in a crisp wave, that smooth-shaven face with the firmly chiselled lips and the square resolute chin—it was Cedric, the hero of *Poisoned Porridge*!

He was far too strong a character, as I realised at once, to be long confined within the covers of any book; he had burst his bindings, and naturally he felt that his first visit was due to the author of his being.

I gave him a cordial welcome (for I could not help feeling proud of the boy), and soon he was in a chair opposite mine,

enthusiastically pouring out all his youthful ambitions, dreams, and speculations into my sympathetic ear.

He continued to do so for several hours—until in fact the suspicion that he was a bit of an egotist (he never once mentioned *Poisoned Porridge*!) had crystallised into the conviction that he was no end of a bore. At last I had to hint that it was long past my usual hour for retiring, and that I must not keep him any longer from his own home. It then appeared that he had no home of his own, and no resources, which was why he had come to me.

I wished then that I had provided him in the novel with some regular occupation, or at least a competence (which would have cost me practically nothing), but I had avoided such prosaic details with an artistic reticence which I now recognise was overstrained. The result was that I had to put him up in the spare bedroom and finance him till he could find employment of some sort—which he never did.

The very next day a dear old lady, with snowy side-curls and cheeks like a winter-apple, drove up in a four-wheeler, which she left me to pay. She was Cedric's mother—and I might have known that she never could endure her son to be out of her sight for long, because I had made rather a point of this maternal devotion in the book. Obviously the only thing to be done was to resign my own sleeping-apartment, and put up with a folding-bedstead in the dressing-room. Even this, though, I never actually occupied—for that afternoon there was a fresh arrival: an attached old family domestic named Martha, who would not hear of parting from her mistress, wages or no wages. And, as the old lady liked her to be within call, Martha had to have the dressing-room, and I slept, fitfully, in the bath. In the novel, Martha had been one of my favourite characters, rough and uncouth, but with a heart of gold. She spoke a racy dialect which I had vaguely described as "Clodshire," a sort of blend of Dorset and Lincolnshire, with just a dash of Suffolk. I cannot say I always understood her meaning myself. She had a characteristic exclamation—"My tender kitties!"—which had struck me as quaintly humorous, in print. In actual life it soon grew slightly tiresome—but then I do think she overdid it.

Cedric's mother, too, was addicted to smoothing his rebellious locks as he sat at her knee, with a hand that Time had left as smooth and dimpled as ever. It was pretty and touching at first, but the mannerism ended by getting on my nerves. So did Cedric's habit of addressing her as "Mother mine!"—which was quite the correct expression, I know, and one I had (I believe) invented for him myself, but I didn't like the way he said it.

However, I was getting fairly accustomed to them—when Yolande turned up, quite unexpectedly. Yolande, it will be remembered, was the heroine in *Poisoned Porridge*. The poor child was homeless; I was responsible for her existence, so I could not well refuse to take her in—especially when Cedric's mother generously offered to share my bed-room with her. So there we all were—quite a happy family, so to speak. That is, we *might* have been, if Yolande had only shown a particle of common-sense. She was all that was adorable and enchanting, or she would have been no heroine of mine—she had a trick of raising a slim forefinger in arch rebuke which (for a while) was extremely engaging. But, with all her sweetness and amiability, she was a trifle trying at times. She had a positive genius for misunderstanding the simplest statements, and acting in consequence with an impulsiveness that was little less than idiotic.

For instance, she loved Cedric fondly, and he was passionately devoted to her. Yet, as often as he sought to declare himself, she would perversely conclude that he was announcing his engagement to another, and that it was her bounden duty to suppress her feelings under a mask of indifference or disdain. In the book this was all right, because otherwise I



UNCLE JOLLIBOY'S TOWN NIECES.

KEEPER SAYS PLACE OVERRUN WITH RABBITS. SUGGEST TO NIECES THAT WE MIGHT THIN THEM OUT A BIT. ABOVE PICTURE REPRESENTS EFFECT ON NIECES OF FIRST RABBIT KILLED! SUGGEST PICKING FLOWERS INSTEAD!

could not have kept the lovers estranged and apart through the necessary number of chapters. But in real life I had never expected that she would write a blotted note of formal farewell and leave the house for ever about every other day! It cost me a small fortune simply in rewards to the Police for her recovery.

Though, mind you, I blame *Cedric* almost as much. He invariably expressed himself with such ambiguity as absolutely to court misunderstanding, and his excessive modesty rendered it impossible for him to believe that *Yolande* could ever regard him with any sentiment but loathing. He would lament the fact to me, night after night, till I was nearly dead for want of sleep—but nothing I could say would convince him that his despair was wholly unnecessary. As if, forsooth, I didn't know the state of my own heroine's feelings!

But I am sorry to say that *Cedric*—in spite of his lofty brow and his strong jaw, and of the fact that in the novel I had invested him with an intellect far above the average—was, not to mince matters, a most particularly exasperating young ass. And this, although I had expressly stated in the book that he had received a liberal Public School and University education—blessings I myself had never enjoyed! Then he was so totally wanting in backbone, too, as to be utterly incapable of supporting himself in any walk of life.

I thought our little party was about complete, but it was soon reinforced by yet another addition in the person of old *Mr. Deedes*, the highly respectable family solicitor of *Poisoned Porridge*, with a peculiarity of wiping his spectacles and

blowing his nose vigorously to conceal his emotion before pronouncing any legal opinion. He did not know much Law—which was hardly surprising, as I knew none myself—and I had, again from a mistaken regard for artistic reticence, purposely refrained from assigning him an office in any specified quarter.

Consequently he came to *me*, and I could hardly object to allow him to use the breakfast-room for professional purposes, though the jappanned tin boxes full of musty precedents and parchments that formed his stock-in-trade, so to speak, seemed a little incongruous in such surroundings. Have I mentioned that the heroine always called him "*Daddy*" *Deedes*? She did.

Still, I confess that I could not repress a certain elation. So unique an experience as mine could not be other than gratifying to the self-esteem of any author. For—without intending, without even being conscious of it at the time—I had created a set of fictitious characters who were so real and actual that they were literally living!

The one drawback I could see to such phenomenal mental fecundity was that they should all be literally living on *me*!

The hour was at hand when this would seem but a trivial worry indeed, in comparison with what I was next called upon to undergo. But let me not anticipate! F. A.

CANNIBALISM IN SCOTLAND.—"Lady in Sandyford district would like 2 gentlemen for dinner daily."—*Glasgow Herald*.



BRIDGE PROBLEMS.—No. 2.

WILL DUMMY GO SPADES?

ODE TO SPRING.

BY A GOURMET.

HAIL, Heavenly Spring,
 To whom the poets sing,
 Chanting thy praises each returning year!
 I, too,
 That have more cause than they to hold thee dear,
 Am moved to raise
 My voice in praise
 Now that I see thee here.

It is not merely that thy skies are blue,
 Thy fields aglow
 With cowslips and the flaming marigold,
 Though that is so.
 But other joys are thine
 (And mine)
 Still more deserving to be told.

For oh, Sweet Spring, thou meanest unto me
 Far more
 Than poets (a lean tribe at best)
 Have ever properly expressed
 Before.
 Thou bring'st to us
 The succulent asparagus,

The new potato and the early pea.
 Thy gooseberry,
 Lurking, divinely green, within a tart,
 Makes glad the heart,
 The swelling heart of me.

Thy lark that soaring high
 Her liquid strain
 Again and yet again
 Pours forth in ecstasy
 Maketh an even more ecstatic pie.

Thy little lambs
 That frisk and bleat
 Beside their dams
 Are excellent to eat.
 While in thy limpid streamlets lurks the trout
 (I like him even better out!)

Therefore, Sweet Spring, thy name
 Ever will I acclaim,
 And while thy food
 Remaineth good
 I will exalt the same.

The Trail of the Motor.

"COLLECTOR. Young Man wants collecting."—*Advt. in Provincial Paper.*



Sidney Satchell.

FISCAL JIU-JITSU.

FIRST MOVEMENT.—*The Friendly Approach.*

ONCE YOU CAN PERSUADE A MAN TO TAKE YOUR HAND, AND LET YOU SLIP YOUR ARM UNDER HIS (FIG. 1).—

SECOND MOVEMENT.—*The Chuck-out.*

IT IS QUITE EASY, BY A LITTLE ABOUT LEVERAGE, TO REMOVE HIM FROM THE PREMISES (FIG. 2).

THEORY OF THE



ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.

House of Commons, Monday, May 15.—Apparently there are few Sabbath afternoon exercises that give the Irish Constabulary purer joy, greater comfort, than rolling in the roadway one of the Representatives of the People. To set upon an ordinary shop-keeper or farmer may serve to fill up time; 'tis poor sport compared with the handling of one of the hon. gentlemen who go to Westminster and, in the sanctuary of the House of Commons, speak disrespectfully of their fellow-countrymen who answer for law and order in Ireland.

There are few Irish Members, even of the Party as at present constituted, who have not from time to time told a sympathetic House how on such occasions they fared. Under GEORGE WYNDHAM's rule there was surcease of this kind of diversion. Disposed to kill Home Rule by kindness, he discouraged Sunday afternoon athletics by the constabulary. A new era, or rather revival of an old one, appears coincidentally with the succession of WALTER LONG to the Chief Secretaryship.

Anyhow MR. ROCHE this afternoon up and told how, paying a Sunday afternoon visit to his constituents in the musically named hamlet of Cappatagle, co. Galway, he was swooped down upon by the constabulary, who lifted him bodily out of the cart, dragging him along the road for fifty yards. "Me askin' thim to lave go," MR. ROCHE added by way of making it clear that he was not a consenting party to the performance.

Owing to natural excitement, rapid utterance, and something quite novel in the way of brogue, it was difficult to follow MR. ROCHE through the full details of the Sabbath afternoon scene. The conversation opened in dry, formal manner by a question on the paper. It invited the Chief Secretary to state whether he was aware that at the place on the date named "the Member for the

Division, while addressing his constituents, was dragged and pulled about by the police?"

This fashion of framing the question endowed it with a certain peaceful, prim formality. It appeared that MR. ROCHE had no personal interest in the matter, was merely making inquiry on behalf of another Member. That was, however, a matter of style. Just as when Royal Proclamation is made the Sovereign is alluded to in the third person as "His Majesty," or as under the ancient French monarchy announcements were made *de par le roi*, so MR. ROCHE, still smarting from his pummelling in the highway of Cappatagle, alluded to the victim of the outrage as "the Member for the Division." Later, when he supplemented the question by a speech, he disdained this courtly circumlocution and, fiercely facing the blushing Chief Secretary, challenged him to deny that "I was dragged about, me askin' thim to lave go."

That was ever MR. ROCHE's strong point. An ordinary man, say a Unionist Member, thus dealt with by the police, might have quietly reconciled himself to participation in their Sunday afternoon service, might even have affected to have enjoyed his share in it. Not so MR. ROCHE. He was not going to leave the criminal constabulary any loophole of escape on the ground that "the Member for the Division" was a consenting party. Several times during his fifty yards excursion down the main street of Cappatagle he "asked thim to lave go." Was the right hon. gentleman aware of that?

WALTER LONG, his blushes more than ever completing his resemblance to a maiden of seventeen, showed a disposition to rise and state the extent of his knowledge on this particular. But the Deputy Speaker was on his feet by way of indication that the incident had closed. By indulgence of House, MR. ROCHE had been permitted to make a personal statement. No debate could follow.

Thereupon the unrelenting advocates of law and order in Cappatagle burst all bounds, turning House of Commons into den of wild beasts. The Deputy Speaker stood with copy of the Orders of the Day in hand waiting to name the first. Below the gangway on his left the Irish Members, tossing like the salt estranging Channel in a westerly gale, incessantly bellowed "LONG! LONG!" For fully two minutes the tumult lasted, the Deputy Speaker standing mutely waiting for an opening. At times the turbulent throng surged towards the Treasury Bench as if with intent to seize the Chief Secretary and afford practical illustration of the way things are managed at Cappatagle on Sabbath



POPULAR SONG—NEW VERSION.

Warder. "Bad-Elia! I'm goin' to steal yer,"
"Bad-Elia, Bad-Elia dear!"

(Sir Henry Fowler asked what authority was responsible for the refusal to allow the Rev. Charles Jennings, Passive Resister, to retain Lamb's *Essays of Elia* for private reading in Worcester Gaol.)

afternoons. Short of that, it seemed that the scene must have violent end.

It was WINSTON CHURCHILL who came to the rescue, adroitly suggesting that if the Chief Secretary desired to make a personal statement surely the House would hear him. The Deputy Speaker promptly followed this friendly lead. He had ruled, in accordance with unbroken precedent, that there could be no debate on a personal question. If the Chief Secretary had a statement to make on his own account he should be heard.

It was delightfully in keeping with the scene that WALTER LONG prefaced his remarks by emphatic declaration that he had no personal statement to make. Of course he accepted the hon. Member's narrative of what took place. His own was based upon the reports of the police.

"Then someone's a liar," cried MR. KILBRIDE. With which incontestable summing up of the situation the storm cleared away and the mere business of the Budget Bill was taken in hand.

Business done.—Not much.

Tuesday night.—PRINCE ARTHUR really annoyed. Haven't for some time heard anything about that plaguy Fiscal Question. To this desirable condition of affairs he has personally contributed a prodigious interval of silence. Before the Easter recess, as all the world knows, DON JOSÉ approached him with proposal of fresh terms, involving continuance of friendly relations on the basis of doing nothing just now. PRINCE ARTHUR politely received his right hon. friend and his comrades of the deputation, promising an answer "by me by."

That indefinite term not arrived. People beginning to forget the matter,



"ME ASKIN' THIM TO LAVE GO."

(Mr. Roche and his electoral anxieties.)

when up gets SOARES and abruptly introduces the sore subject. Worst thing about it is that St. JOHN BRODRICK is used as the instrument of attack. Been making a speech down in Surrey and, Army Corps and New Regulation Caps being now out of his line, must needs talk about Colonial Conference meeting next year, whereas PRINCE ARTHUR has repeatedly stated—one of the few definite declarations made by him on the matter—that during the existence of the present Parliament no steps shall be taken in direction of giving effect to DON JOSÉ'S Tariff Scheme.

How can the two things be reconciled? Liberals instantly on the alert; want to move the adjournment in order to have field night. This amiable effort LOWTHER (J. W.) frustrates. But there is angry talk, embarrassing questions, renewed necessity for saying nothing in rotund phrases that sound as if something were meant.

Worst of this kind of thing is that Leader of House, publicly questioned, cannot, as in case of loyal, loving friends, promise reply "hymeby." Must say something right off, the "something" to be as far removed as possible from answer to question.

So PRINCE ARTHUR airily said he "saw no inherent improbability in the hypothesis that before the last day of 1906 the Party now in power will be again returned at the head of a large majority."

That had calculated desired effect. The Liberals went off on fresh scent cunningly laid. Whilst they roared derision, PRINCE ARTHUR sat down and next question came on. As usual in kindred circumstances, he had been equal to the occasion. But why was the task forced upon him by a peripatetic colleague?

Business done.—Drear dull day in debate on Budget Bill.

Wednesday night.—A big day this for HERBERT GLADSTONE. BOBBY SPENCER has resolved to add a cubit to the stature of his shirt collar. After long labouring in a fruitless wilderness, coming up to the Table time after time, taking place to the left of the Ministerial Whips in token of fresh defeat in the Division Lobby, this afternoon HERBERT receives from the Clerk the paper in token that his side have won the day. Gulping down his emotion, leaning slightly on the stalwart form of BOBBY proudly erect on his left, he reads the figures. "Ayes to the Right, 266. Noes to the Left, 80." A majority of 186!

HARRY CHAPLIN, who had gallantly led the forlorn hope, "telling" for the minority, beat hasty retreat. Things not going well with him just now from any point of the compass. Told a sympathetic House an hour ago how he had reduced the rent of his tenants by steps leading up to—or down to—70 per cent.

"You must have overdone it at one time," said JOHN BRUNNER, who pays his shareholders only thirty-five per cent.

CHAPLIN's heart too heavy to retort on the jibe. Rents his private affair; the condition of the Tariff Reform crusade lay close by the nation's heart. Withdraw it, shattered by relentless foes, undermined by faithless friends, and the great heart, if it did not actually stop beating, would suffer grievous shock. Incidentally came this amendment to the Agricultural Rating Bill.

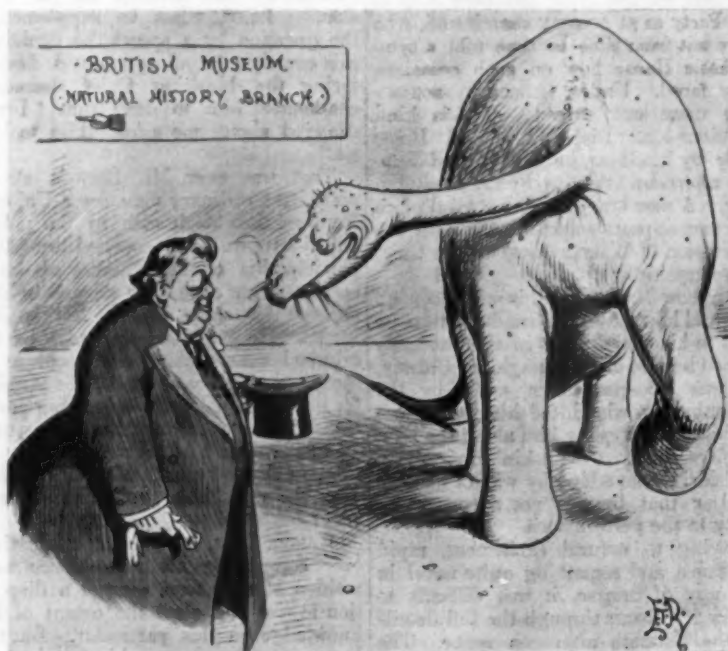
LAMBERT having from the Opposition benches moved an amendment continu-

ADVICE TO THE RHEUMATIC.

"The diet must be light . . . no wine should be taken, except, perhaps, a little dry champagne. Rubbing or shampooing the affected joints is beneficial, though painful."

WHEN 'gainst the pains of rheumatiz
You undertake a campaign,
Be sure that light your diet is,
And very dry your champagne.

And when the joints that ache and swell
The nurse proceeds to shampoo,
Be temperate in words as well,
And say (instead of "D—") "Pooh!"



QUITE UNIQUE; OR, WELCOMING THE DIPLODOCUS CARNEGII.

Prof. R-y L-n-k-s-t-r. "Dear me! Most remarkable animal! You are very welcome."

The Diplodocus (enthusiastically). "Wal! If he ain't a daisy!! Quite 'n interesting specimen of the British Pro-fessor! Carnegie 'll just have to send a cast o' him over to the States right away!"

ing in permanency the Act that will expire next year, had run away, leaving his bantling on the floor of the House by Brother GERALD'S feet. CHAPLIN picked it up, pressed it gently to his capacious bosom, carried it through the Division Lobby with the result recorded.

PRINCE ARTHUR, who last week dallied with the infant, encouraging expectation that Brother GERALD would officially adopt it, now discarded it. Led the bulk of his forces to swell the numbers of the Opposition, and so gave the long-suffering Liberal Whips one wild moment of triumph.

Business done.—Agricultural Rating Bill read second time.

Adding Insult to Injury.

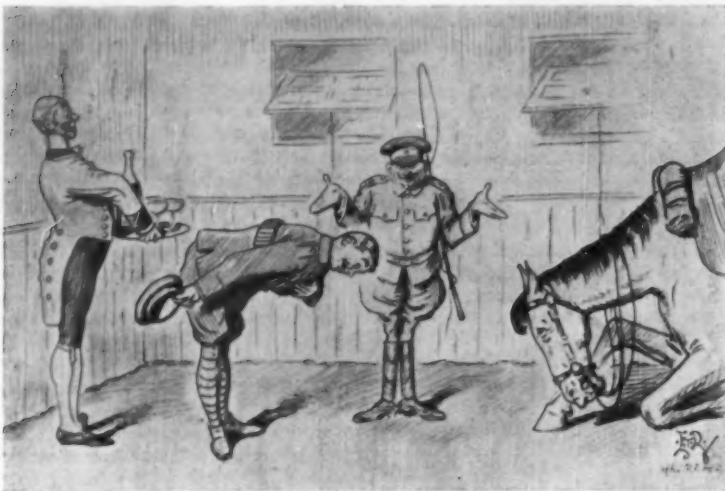
FROM the Official "Rules for Sub-Postmasters":—"Free medical attendance is allowed in respect of injuries sustained on duty at the hands of the Department's Medical Officer."

FROM a notice at the Cambridge Union Society:—"A debate was held on May 16, Mr. J. K. MOZLEY, President, in the chair. At 9.54 the President vacated the chair, being taken for the remainder of the debate by the Secretary." Another most unfortunate case of Mistaken Identity.



WORD-PAINTING.

Sportsmen (who have just lost a good fish). "THAT WAS A GOOD ONE, TIM."
Tim. "DEED THEN IT WAS! HE WAS AS LONG AS AN UMBRELLA, AND HAD A SIDE ON HIM LIKE A SHOP SHUTTER!"



THE NEW RECRUIT TRAINING-SYSTEM FOR THE CAVALRY.

"THE RECRUIT WILL BE INTRODUCED TO HIS HORSE UNDER COMFORTABLE CONDITIONS WHICH INSPIRE CONFIDENCE."

A QUEER PIECE OF BUSINESS.

MR. TREE's impersonation of *Isidore Izard*, Financier and Newspaper Proprietor, in Mr. GRUNDY's carefully executed adaptation of OCTAVE MIRBEAU's play, *Les Affaires sont les Affaires*, entitled *Business is Business*, recently produced at His Majesty's, is a marvellous *tour de force*. There is but one way of rightly representing this odious character, and that way is Mr. TREE's. Artistically true in every detail to the type he has chosen as the original of the portrait, Mr. TREE spares no pains to make this highly charged picture of a coarse vulgar millionaire repulsively attractive. There are bright gleams of natural affection for his spoiled son, as also for his unsympathetic daughter, nor does he appear to be anything but ordinarily kind to his attached and timorous wife, a part played by Mrs. E. H. BROOKE with such domestic pathos as touches the heart and elicits the most sincere applause. Except for this rôle of *Mrs. Izard* the play is a one-part piece of a somewhat sombre tone, relieved by a few excellent bits of such character-acting as fall to the lot of Mr. ROBB HARWOOD impersonating the artfully silent German Professor *Gruggh*, to Mr. COOKSON as the cunning solicitor Mr. *Devenish*, and to Mr. FISHER WHITE as *Jennings*, the head gardener.

MR. BASIL GILL, representing *Hubert Forsyth*, "a chemist in *Izard's* employ," has a difficult task to render the character either interesting or sympathetic. *Forsyth* owes his position to *Izard*, who, of course for his own ends and purposes, has rescued him from starvation, and not only does he fall in love with the millionaire's daughter *Inez* (a very trying part, by the way, for any young actress, even if possessed of greater experience than has Miss VIOLA TREE), but he marries her secretly, and these two, by remaining under the same roof with her parents and his employer, thus living a life of duplicity, court the punishment that discovery of the fact must sooner or later entail upon them. An audience can have no sympathy with such underhandedness, especially where there is an excellent old mother in whom the girl ought to have confided.

As *Cyril*, the spoilt son of *Izard*, spendthrift and snob, Mr. GEORGE TROLLOPE gives us a first-rate bit of character-acting, representing the gilded youth as a common heartless little beast, deficient even in ordinary gratitude to his father

for favours received. When the sudden death of this objectionable young man is announced, the only sentiment felt is one of curiosity as to the effect this shock will have on his father.

The millionaire has our sympathies when he turns the arithmetical and compound-interest tables on the two swindlers who have combined to cheat him: we quite appreciate the millionaire's gutter-snipe double-shuffle, expressive of triumph, so reminiscent of his earliest days in Bermondsey; so natural too in such a man are his exuberant spirits exhibited in whackings on shoulders, and horse-play with a huge paper-knife, which he digs point blank into his companions' ample waistcoats, thus indicating the friendliness of his humour, much after the manner of Mr. *Quilp* when playfully encouraging his miserable slave *Sampson Brass*, attorney-at-law of *Bevis Marks*. His admiration of his own portrait: his confidential winks at it: in fact, all his utterly bad and disgusting manners, caddish in the extreme, are just part and parcel of such a man as the dramatist has

wished to describe, and the actor has determined to depict. His utter fury, when thwarted by the secret marriage of his deceitful daughter with the equally deceitful *employé*, is awful to behold.

Most artistic is the contrast between the aristocratic, but unfortunately impecunious, gentleman the *Earl of Hathersage*, played with great distinction of manner by Mr. DAWSON MILWARD, and the extra-vulgar, caddish, *nouveau riche*, as portrayed by Mr. TREE. The strong scene between these two is admirably played; and equal praise is due to the rendering of all the great scenes in the piece. Throughout, Mr. TREE's by-play is very striking, never out of the picture: in fact in dramatic parlance "his 'business' is business," and such exceptionally "good business," that if the front of the House does the same, the financial results ought to be exceptionally satisfactory.

A LITTLE WONDER.

MASTER MISCHA ELMAN is a wonderful boy. Only thirteen, and doesn't look a day older than that; if anything a little younger. A bit too old for toys, he plays with the violin, and his performance on this instrument is absolutely marvellous. We are not, as a rule, favourably inclined towards infantine phenomena, but Master MISCHA is the exception. All that he does is just perfect, without effort, quietly, no posturing, no sham exhaustion. Master MISCHA just takes his performance as part of his day's work, or play, then bows his thanks for plaudits, and retires, probably to a good and well-deserved "tuck in."

"So Orpheus played of old, or poets lie,
And as the beasts were charmed—"

But I will not continue the quotation. Certainly JOHN WILKES' motto will never be adopted by Master MISCHA, "*Aræi meo non confido*." Musically armed, he will go out conquering and to conquer, bringing in captives, even among the Philistines, to his bow and his Strad.

WE are sorry to see that the *Westminster Gazette* is becoming tainted by the bloodthirsty instinct which characterises some of its evening contemporaries. What else can be the meaning of these headlines?—

THE MOTOR-BOAT FIASCO.

NOT A SINGLE LIFE LOST.

OPERATIC NOTES.

May 17.—Memorable for MELBA. Grand reception by



Alfredo collared. Papa Germont expostulates with his son on his reckless extravagance in boots and linen.

crowded house; and our ever welcome soprano quite at home to any number of callers. *La Traviata* is the opera, and MELBA as *Violetta* is in fine voice, singing like the sweetest warbler of wood-notes wild, and trilling us through with pleasure. *A propos* of trilling, why is not *Trilby* turned into an opera? It has all the humour and pathos of *La Bohème*, while to a dramatic artist and vocalist the character of *Svengali* offers chances not to be despised. Could Madame MELBA be *Trilby*? If she can play and sing *Mimi*, why not *Du Maurier's Trilby*? No extra charge for the suggestion (copyrighted), and libretto undertaken and supplied "while you wait," at the shortest possible notice.

Signor SCOTT comes out strong as old *Georgy Germont*, the father "with a past," but *Alfredo* his son, as represented by Signor CONSTANTINO, does not act like his father; had he done so he wouldn't be in his present difficulty—"O les

femmes, les femmes, il n'y a que ça!"—but in this instance "the donation of CONSTANTINE" signifies that this CONSTANTINE has been gifted with a grand voice and does full justice to VERDI's music.

The ladies and gentlemen invited by *Violetta* to her "at home" were not in their very best form, but Signor MANCINELLI and his merry men in the orchestra made up for most deficiencies.



Melba in her new Umbrella Hat.

The ancient tradition of the opera as to costume is still adhered to, the characters all appearing in such cavalier-like attire as is popularly associated with the play of *Don César de Bazan*; the only exception being the principal, *Violetta*, who is in advance of her time by some centuries. She is distinctly modern, attired in wonderful gowns, Worth providing, well Worth seeing, Worth of the occasion.

Our record of the singings and doings of Madame MELBA in this and other operas must be "continued in our next."



ALFREDO MAKES THE MONEY FLY.

Melba-Violetta (aside). "He can do what he likes with the property coins. I've always got my own notes, and no one can touch them."

DRURY LANE DRAMA.

IN no character is Sir HENRY IRVING seen to greater advantage than as *Thomas Becket*, Chancellor of England and Archbishop of Canterbury, in TENNYSON's play of *Becket*, as arranged for the stage (of which the poet knew very little) by the actor for whom it was written. It is indeed a fine, a masterful performance, and from beginning to end Sir HENRY grips his audience. No wonder that Act after Act the curtain is raised at least five times in answer to the enthusiastic plaudits of a crowded and intensely interested audience. Mrs. CECIL RALEIGH as the injured *Queen Eleanor*

commands our sympathy, and it is difficult for us, even in most charitable mood, to make any excuse for the lax conduct of the Second Henry, well represented by Mr. GERALD LAWRENCE, who neglects the handsome *divorcée* of Louis of France, now Queen of England, for *Rosamund de Clifford*, however prettily played the part may be by Miss MAUD FEALY. But we quarrel not with history: *chacun à son goût*, and as the incident has helped to furnish Sir HENRY with one of the finest parts in his *répertoire* it is not for us to be captious critics of established facts. *The Merchant of Venice* is now on the bill, and between the Merchant and the Martyr the honours, for Sir HENRY, are equally divided.

NEW FRIENDS AND OLD FARCES.

It would not be an easy task to find a better company for a smart, give-and-take, rattling, knockabout Three-Act farce of a type made familiar to us during the time of the two CHARLES'S, WYNDHAM and HAWTREY, than that now being "presented" to the public by Mr. CHARLES FROHMAN at the Comedy Theatre, where *The Dictator* is being played, with the agile, neat-handed and mirth-provoking artist, Mr. WILLIAM COLLIER, in the leading part of *Brooke Travers*. His effects are made without apparent effort, yet he works hard, and is ably seconded by Mr. EDWARD ABELLES representing his valet *Simpson*, and he is strongly supported by the talented members of the company, individually and collectively; by JOHN BARRYMORE as *Charley Hyme*, by petite MARIE DOBO as *Lucy Sheridan*, by lively GRACE HADSALL as *Mrs. Bowie*, whose husband, *Colonel Bowie*, is strongly individualised by Mr. GEORGE NASH in the shape of a most truculent and designing personage, and by LOUISE ALLEN, whose *Señora Juanita Arquilla* is a fine specimen of genuine burlesque acting.

Mr. McGRATH as *Duffy* the detective, and HENRY WEST as the *Rev. Arthur Bostick*, assist in "keeping the tambourine a-rollin'," as does FRANCIS SEDGWICK who, as "the Health Officer at Porto Banos," is not less amusing than is LOUIS EAGAN as *Señor José Dravo*, "Proprietor of the Hotel del Prado." This piece, described as "a Comedy in Three Acts," is simply a rattling farce of the ultra-farical order, reminiscent of many previous plots and characters which have all done good service in their time since the early days of *Bonsoir Signor Pantalon*, and *Twice Killed*. We know that *Señora Juanita* and her dagger; we know her and that blade which "comes from Sheffield;" in fact, we have the happiness to reckon pretty well "all the persons in the play" among our "auld acquaintance" that "should not be forgot;" and while admiring the audacious cleverness of the author, Mr. HARDING DAVIS, we heartily congratulate him on his great good fortune in having placed his cards with such skilled players that they appear to be all trumps. The *jeu de scene* never flags, the steam is kept up to highest pressure, and the dialogue is given so well and so clearly that not only is no single point lost, but many are made which might otherwise have been entirely missed.

Truly this author's "lines have fallen in pleasant places," and the popularity of the piece, as played by WILLIAM COLLIER and present company, is assured beyond all question.

The "curtain raiser" must come in for more than a mere word of praise. It is a duologue entitled *The Philosopher in the Apple Orchard*, by E. HARCOURT WILLIAMS, from a story by ANTHONY HOPE, and it is perfectly played by Miss LILIAS WALDEGRAVE and Mr. NORMAN MCKINNEL. It does not commence until 8.30, and plays for just half an hour, and to this slight piece the term "Comedy," misused as descriptive of *The Dictator*, can be honestly applied. The two characters are in capital dramatic contrast, and amateurs in search of a duologue requiring little scenery and no expensive costumes might do worse than turn their attention to this story of a pair among the apples.

A Parti-coloured Minister.

THE Magpie Madrigal Society will give a concert this (Wednesday) evening at the Royal Horticultural Society's Hall, Vincent Square, in aid of the Westminster Hospital. Among other attractions will be a very piquant costume worn by the Colonial Secretary. The *Daily Mail* is our authority for the statement that "the lady members of the Society, who include . . . Mr. and Mrs. ALFRED LYTTELTON, are all attired in white dresses with a black zouave jacket to give a magpie 'effect.'" Did Mr. LYTTELTON ever play for the famous Clown Cricketers?

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

EIGHTEEN months ago Sir HORACE PLUNKETT published, through Mr. MURRAY, a disquisition on *Ireland in the New Century*. It evoked an outburst of resentment which incidentally sent it through three editions in as many months. Amongst its earliest and most influential condemnors was a Father of the Church, who, whilst placing the book in the *Index Expurgatorius*, confessed *more Hibernico* that he had not read it. My Baronite has, and admits that he is not surprised at the outcry. In temperate, and therefore effective, manner, Sir HORACE frankly discusses his fellow countrymen, extenuating nothing but setting down naught in malice. It is the talk of a wise, loving, but honestly implacable parent with a favourite child.

He took him by the collar,

Cruel only to be kind,

And to his exceeding dolour

Gave him several whacks behind.

Of course the child does not like it, but he would do well to consider the counsel, take to heart the friendly warning. To this end a cheap edition of the book is issued, with addition of an epilogue in which Sir HORACE shrewdly replies to his critics.

There is insuperable difficulty in the way of writing a sufficient and satisfactory biography of a man whilst the subject of the work is still alive. At best it cannot, save in length, differ greatly from the style and character of an entry in *Who's Who* or an interview on behalf of a newspaper. In *Mr. Asquith* (METHUEN), Mr. ALDERSON has done the best possible, producing an admirable account of a successful life. It principally takes the form of record of the ex-Home Secretary's political and Parliamentary career, with summaries of his principal speeches. The most interesting chapters in the book are the first four, which deal with his boyhood and college life. To these his old tutor and headmaster Dr. ABBOTT, and Mr. HERBERT WARREN, President of Magdalen College, Oxford, contribute personal reminiscences. Quotations going back nearly twenty years testify that our TOBY, M.P. from the first recognised the genius and foretold the pre-eminence of the brilliant Member for East Fife. When a man's name is in all the churches, appreciation becomes commonplace, and applause a matter of course. It is at the outset of a career that such encouragement is valuable, and is most gratefully remembered by the recipient.

Roger Trevelion, by JOSEPH HOCKING (WARD, LOCK & Co.), is a well-written but somewhat old-fashioned style of romance, dealing with strange family legends, weird scenes of witchcraft, phantoms, fights, and fantasies. The familiar story of the strife between younger and elder brother, the mother's pet *versus* the father's pride, is here used to some purpose, and a rather colourless heroine is treated in such a manner as, in the mistaken opinion of the author, to require a foot-note that guarantees the startling incident as a fact not to be gainsaid by the most incredulous. This foot-note would have come in with far more authority had it been placed, as Sir WALTER SCOTT used to give his authority for anything peculiarly strange, at the end of the novel, or at the close of the chapter, on a page apart. The earlier portion of this story is so excellent that the reader is encouraged in expectations which are never thoroughly realised. There is repetition of incident which abates the interest. Yet those who love legendary lore, who know the ropes and the art of skipping, are sure to find themselves interested in this romantic tale.

THE BARON



DE

R.W.